Sagar Mala project

2526. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that much hyped Sagar Mala project to envisage integrated development of ports, shipping and inland water transport appears to have lost steam;

(b) whether it is a fact that only a paltry sum of Rs. 25 crores has been asked as budgetary support for the year 2004-05 for the project of Rs. 1,00,000 crores; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry has not been able to identify the specific projects under the scheme and is yet to get a formal cabinet approval?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) 'Sagar Mala' for rapid capacity expansion and modernization of ports along India's west and east coasts was amongst the new initiatives announced by the then Prime Minister on 15th August, 2003. Development of Inland Navigation will also be a part of 'Sagar Mala' As a first step, integrated development of Nhava Sheva (Jawaharlal Nehru Port) and Kochi (Cochin) ports, at a cost of Rs. 7500 crores was to begin.

Pursuant to the announcement, an outline of 'Sagar Mala' Programme was prepared and an outlay of Rs. 24.48 crores was provided in Interim Budget for 2004-05 for activities to be taken up under the Programme. Specific projects/schemes were to be finalized after approval of the Competent Authority to the 'Sagar Mala' Programme outline. However, the proposal for approval of the Competent Authority to the outline of the Programme could not be processed to its finality. The outlay of Rs. 24.48 crores for the Programme has been retained in the Main Budget 2004-05.

Revival of HDPEL

2527. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state the details of survival/revival plan of Hooghly Dock and Port Engineers Ltd. (HDPEL)?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Government is looking into the possibility of revival of Hooghly Dock and Port Engineers

Limited. Since the Revival Plan has not been firmed up, it will be too early to elaborate on the detailed components of the Revival Plan.

Indian trained crew on foreign ships

2528. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government encourage Indian trained crew to find employment in foreign ships and other vessels,

(b) whether it is a fact that thousands of Indians are thus employed under different foreign flags all over the world;

(c) whether Government are taking steps to put hurdles in their way and bring them back;

(d) if so, whether Government would provide alternate employment to such trained Indian personnel; and

(e) the details of steps proposed by Government to review such policies which would create employment crisis in our country?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Developing of minor ports

2529. SHRI C. PERUMAL:
SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are 185 minor and intermediate ports in the country;

(b) whether any scheme is on the anvil to develop minor ports by allocating liberal assistance to State Governments for the purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?